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**Testimony in Favor of LD 1451:
An Act to Strengthen Coordination of Community Transportation
on behalf of Portland Recovery Community Center**

April 18, 2025

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation,

My name is Leslie Clark, and I serve as Executive Director of the Portland Recovery Community Center (PRCC), where we provide free, peer-based recovery support services to individuals and families affected by substance use disorder. I am submitting testimony on behalf of PRCC in strong support of LD 1451, and I appreciate Senator Tipping and the other cosponsors for bringing this legislation forward.

Transportation is a critical, and often overlooked, social determinant of health. Members at PRCC—like many Mainers—rely on public and community transportation to access recovery support, employment, education, healthcare, and basic services. When transportation is unavailable, inconsistent, or unaffordable, it becomes a barrier to sustained recovery.

In 2024, PRCC surveyed our members, and nearly 20% reported relying on public transportation to access our services. That percentage represents hundreds of individuals every week who depend on a functioning transit system to maintain their recovery. PRCC serves as the Maine Recovery Hub, providing statewide technical assistance and support to other recovery community centers. We visited 17 other recovery community centers across the state last year, and the same message was echoed again and again: lack of reliable transportation, especially in rural regions, keeping people from receiving the support they need.

LD 1451 presents a smart, coordinated solution. It builds upon existing work by MaineDOT and aligns with national best practices from the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. By creating a state-level coordinating council and regional mobility management hubs, this bill strengthens our ability to make better use of the \$206 million already spent annually on transportation services for older adults, people with disabilities, low-income individuals, and others who are transportation-disadvantaged.

Increased coordination will not only reduce costs and inefficiencies—it will improve outcomes. In communities where mobility management is in place, people miss fewer appointments, experience fewer service gaps, and report higher satisfaction with transportation options. These are measurable impacts that directly affect Maine residents' health and economic well-being.

On behalf of PRCC and the communities we serve, I respectfully urge the committee to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1451. Thank you for your commitment to improving transportation access for all Mainers.

Sincerely,

Leslie Clark
Executive Director
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